

11 OCT 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT : National Capital Planning Commission; Presentation on  
Water, Sewerage, and Housing by the MWCOG

REFERENCE: Memo dtd [REDACTED] to DD/S fm AD/L, Subject: Metropolitan  
Washington Council of Government Reports

1. The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) meeting on  
5 October 1972, Agenda Item #2 at 0809 local, had a presentation given  
by representatives of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
(MWCOG) on the subjects of (1) water and sewerage and (2) housing.

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[REDACTED] of the Building Planning Staff, RECD/OL, attended these  
hearings and made extraneous notes which are outlined here.

2. The NCPC Staff stated that these reports had been seen earlier  
but that comments were withheld, and no action was taken because the  
Draft did not contain the graphs, charts, and pictures. It was felt,  
at the earlier meeting, that the reports were incomplete and difficult  
to interpret without these visual aids. It was also stated that the  
NCPC is usually 8-10 months behind in the review of this sort of study.  
This accounts, in part, for the lack of timeliness (1971-1972) of the  
reports.

3. Martin Rody of the Commission Staff introduced Mr. Markel of  
the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Staff. He was the  
principal officer in charge of the planning and preparation of the  
Water and Sewerage Plan and Program - 1971-72. Mr. Markel summarized

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the content of the report (booklet page 1) much as it was originally written. Some of the additional comments he made were as follows:

a. MWCOG is an A-95 consultant on water and sewerage and they have application review responsibility for Blue Plains and Occoquan treatment facilities. It was stated that, in the past, problems arising from these A-95 reviews have been due to emphasis on homes and land use in general. It appears that the <sup>new</sup> ~~view~~ emphasis will combine more of the Environmental Protection Agency thinking on water quality, and COG will be working closely with EPA on this change in direction.

b. Recently, Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, D.C., pledged in a signed resolution to come-up-with a meaningful water resource program. A task force of COG has been set up to update present information on this subject to coincide with the resolution.

c. Chapter V of booklet, "Regional Water and Sewerage Program" contains the priority system which COG wants to emphasize as the heart of the water and sewerage planning for the Metro region. In A-95 evaluations, these priority listings are a "bible" for COG planners.

4. Mr. Charles C. Johnson, member of the Commission, asked, "What affect will new water quality legislation before Congress have on the COG proposals?" Mr. Markel answered that some drastic changes will

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be made due to the new water quality guidelines being legislated. Present standards are considerably lower than EPA proposals in the legislation before Congress.

5. "Who will enforce these new guidelines on water quality?" was asked by Mr. Johnson. Answer - "Agencies such as Virginia State Water Control Board and other state and local bodies will be responsible for the enforcement of new/present laws."

6. "What is the impact of this (overall COG proposal) plan on HUD, EPA, and COG?" "The plan develops certain alternatives, more clearly defined and qualified for each body working with the problems on water and sewerage." "Is this not a plan for the communities as against a general Metro idea?" "That is not our (COG's) intention; but since A-95 reviews have to be made to secure Federal funds, there is a sense of control (by COG) on these proposals. The intention, naturally, is to have the smaller entities control their own destinies in whatever way they desire - within certain general guidelines."

7. "Did COG develop this plan on their own?" "No. The Regional Planning Committee of COG with consultation of elected officials and civic association leaders (15 members). They did not agree on everything but they stressed unanimous approval of the package." Chairman Reifel: "Generally, will there be enough water in the foreseeable future?" "Upstream regulations will help and assure us to some degree that we will have enough water. Devices in houses may help to economize the

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use (payment as well) of water. EPA has models on water consumption, storm water runoff (where there is no storm sewer but where water is allowed to run off into the ground and recycle), and water control (mechanisms of different types). There also should be upstream storage of water - This is the official position of COG."

8. Capital improvement projects have an impact on water (and sewerage) in the region. Regional priorities have to be sold. Emergency interconnects on/for water have not been made between the various units which have water. This should be done soonest to insure adequate water for those areas which may have catastrophic droughts or disastrous storms, etc.

9. Water resources management has to be reemphasized.

10. Mr. Edward Hrom<sup>9</sup>nik spoke on the comments from Federal agencies on the proposals set out by COG. 75 agencies had been contacted and there were 14 replies (ours was 1 of these). All replies were useful and are to be incorporated into COG's follow-on reporting. The Department of Defense and Corps of Engineers sent in detailed (multi-page) reports. There was no report from Environmental Protection Agency. (Mr. Johnson commented that they should be asked again - "They have \$2 billion for this kind of project. Get after them to reply and, in depth!") Mr. Conrad, Executive Director, explained that EPA gets its opportunities to comment at the A-95 review level.\*

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11. Executive Director (Staff) comments on the proposal by COG were read by Mr. Rody of the Staff. Emphasis was made on addressing the water quality in the Potomac. Another item was that the report does not give enough emphasis to/on the amount of raw water available to the Washington area. The Potomac can supply around 600,000,000 gallons per day and consumption runs approximately 475,000,000 gallons per day. This supply of water will be okay until 1976 when it is estimated that the Metro region will require in excess of 630,000,000 gallons per day. This was stated as a "crises" situation, and NCPC staff feels that the COG is too casual in their report.

12. There are also critical capacities in the sewerage treatment facilities.

13. Pollution of the Potomac has to be abated as soon as possible.

14. Executive Order 11507 states in part that "a tie-in with the local sewer system must be made whenever possible." This will avoid possible mismanagement of the total system through the requirement that each activity maintain a degree of the ultimate handling and treatment required in the region.

15. An area-wide base plan is needed - dollars supplied for water resource management.

16. Mr. Thiry mentioned that Seneca Dam was a real problem and should have more priority than report indicates. Mentioned that Corps of Engineers should have sent in a report on water - "they control the whole thing!" He also mentioned that the Bloomington Reservoir has to be programmed a week in advance to get any water from it. Mr. Johnson -

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"Is the plan going to do anything about the quality of water in the Potomac? When will I be able to swim in the river, and when can we plant and feed the river with healthy, living creatures?" Answer - "Water quality standards are referred to in the report (not specifically mentioned). If guidelines are followed, the water quality should improve.

17. Johnson - "If I wanted a summary and evaluation of other agencies, could I get them direct if I needed them? What does COG think about the water situation?" Answer by COG - "COG has not actually become involved in technical evaluation of water quality!"

18. Johnson - "How about the recycling of water? Has anything developed so that this is near reality?" COG - "Mentioned in report but not discussed in detail."

19. Johnson - "Well, we have learned that the future may lead us to the point where we put wastewater back into the land - into nature's channels of control - get rid of sewers, let water (sewer and rain) run back into recycling systems for reuse. Congress is talking about these things. Does your report speak of this?"

One of the ex-officio members spoke here on how Montgomery County has passed a 4-year plan to recycle pure water back into the Potomac. "This should be a goal for the Metro!"

20. The Corps of Engineers is planning to recycle water three times and return for drinking in the Metro region (no timing mentioned).

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21. The report was accepted with the change to include Seneca Dam problem by the Commission.

22. The speaker on the "Housing Policies and Programs for Metropolitan Washington - 1971" was Mary Holbein of COG. (She spoke to me later and advised that her latest report would be available around December 1972 or January 1973. She asked us to call her - 223-6800, x334.) This summary was shorter and more directly to the point. The totality of her statement might be written out as a one-liner. We do need housing for the lower income people of the Metro region, and it is not all that available. Her group has been active since 1967. 50 people - government and civic groups do the work of compiling data and work to bring about suggestions for solutions. She mentioned that a "common thread throughout the report" was the "goal" or, at least, a "desired end result" would be to have a decent home for every person who wants one. Cost factors, relocation problems, resources for construction of new or rebuilding of old homes, and co-location with job opportunities were all discussed. It was noted that in 1962, 62 percent of the job opportunities were in D.C.; and in 1972, this figure was reduced to only 45 percent.

23. In terms of priorities, the "COG Housing Staff" has several areas of concern:

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- a. Supply of homes.
- b. Opportunity to buy or rent (fair share formula - by county, etc., enters into picture here).
- c. Cost of homes.
  - (1) Industrial housing was discussed (one area development underway and two-three others planned).
  - (2) Builder and Sponsor Committee.
  - (3) HUD Section 235 - Home Owner Program - few in the area qualify because of cost of homes.
  - (4) Close monitoring of Federal projects (where new or enlarged development to take place). GSA guidelines on relocation were mentioned as important consideration in Federal employee dispersals.
  - (5) Race and class distinction monitored.
  - (6) Bring local jurisdictions into line with HUD Regulations - goal of COG.
  - (7) Abuses (by real estate people) in housing not as bad locally as they are nationally. This is due to the work of citizens and governmental units.
  - (8) Housing management. There's a course to be given sometime this fall by COG.
  - (9) Landlord/Tenant leases.



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(a) Arlington County has first law in the region to cover this.

(b) Montgomery County government is in a squabble which may kill their efforts to establish a commission.

24. Mr. Johnson - "Misinterpretation of pages 38-39 - Was housing adequate in 1960? If not, it should be so stated!" Mr. Holbein - "No, it was not. Thank you!"

25. Mr. Johnson - "In sheer numbers, does Metro have a shortage of housing and doesn't this cover every economic bracket - high and low?" Mr. Holbein - "Yes, though the low-income has very little control over his economic status and can't change things."

26. Executive Director's Recommendations (Mr. Rody)

a. Residence Division - lacks detailed analysis of needs of locality.

b. Deficiencies in Environment - suitability of housing for Federal employees is also true of all other (private sector) employees who work and want to live in the Metro region.

c. Relationships of Housing to Transportation - not too well spelled out and should be better explained in later reports.

d. Supply of Housing - Fair share formula and other problems, not enough detail.

27. Mr. Thiry (Prince George's County) - Nothing about new towns in COG report.

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28. Mr. Reifel - Department of Defense has ways of supplying information on housing needed for military employees. He insisted, as did others on the Commission, that (department by department) they should be forced to supply reports. Lawyer, when asked if NCPC could sue them for information, said that would be discussed in an executive session.

29. Staff again - Metro Wide Corporation to work on are housing needs mentioned as a possible solution. In Metro, 50,000 units need replacement or repair, primarily in D.C.

30. Mr. Johnson objected to the Metro Wide Corporation - doesn't have his support.

3]. On a vote, with Metro Wide Corporation eliminated, the Executive Director's Report, COG's Housing Report for Metropolitan Washington - 1971, was accepted.